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Navy & Marine Corps Medical News
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This service distributes news and information to Sailors and Marines, their families, civilian employees, and retired Navy and Marine Corps families. Further dissemination of this e-mail is encouraged.

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1) Breast health program gets new center
By LT Rick Haupt, TRICARE

PORT HUENEME, Calif. - A Breast Education Center, part of the Department of Defense initiative to improve detection, diagnosis, and treatment of breast cancer, will help women learn about and fight this dreaded disease.

The Breast Education Center, which is part of the Port Hueneme, Calif. Naval Ambulatory Care Center, was dedicated January 7. It was established to help educate women and men about breast cancer and teach them to recognize its symptoms through self-examination.

"This marks the beginning of a wonderful service, which we proudly offer our beneficiaries -- a service providing education for early detection of breast cancer, and support for those women diagnosed with breast disease," said CDR Helen Pearlman, NC, head of the Managed Care Department at the ambulatory center.

One of every eight women develops breast cancer in a lifetime. It is the most common cancer in American women and is the leading cause of death among women ages 15-54.

"Many think breast cancer doesn't affect women until [they

are in] their 50's," said Lisa Zimmerman, Chairperson of the Port Hueneme Federal Women's Program. She said that women, whether young or older, active duty military or family members, may be susceptible to the disease.

The Department of Defense's Breast Cancer Prevention, Diagnosis and Education Initiative began in 1996, when Congress awarded \$25 million to improve access to breast cancer detection, diagnosis and treatment. With preventative medicine as an integral part of managed care, the funding was distributed worldwide through the TRICARE program.

Breast care education centers were opened at military medical facilities throughout Southern California, including Naval Medical Center, San Diego, and Naval Hospitals Camp Pendleton and Twentynine Palms.

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2) Healthy attitudes at Great Lakes

By Karen Murphy, Navy Environmental Health Center, Norfolk, Va.

Tobacco cessation and a healthy lifestyle as keys to wellness are the messages from Naval Hospital, Great Lakes, Ill. The hospital has two new programs: "Recruit Training Command Tobacco Initiatives and Beyond" and "Passport to Wellness" aimed at new recruits and command staff.

The health promotion team at Naval Hospital, Great Lakes, is partnering with the local Naval Dental Research Institute to take tobacco cessation to the deckplate. The tobacco cessation outreach program goals are to urge all recruits to stay away from tobacco. To emphasize the importance of tobacco cessation, participants in the program see digital images of the damage tobacco has done to their gum tissue. Another goal is to train 100 tobacco-cessation facilitators, who upon graduation will take the message to their shipmates.

Medical staff and civilian employees at Naval Hospital, Great Lakes, have a chance to navigate their way to wellness in 1998. The Health Promotion Division is providing a "Passport to Wellness" program and the opportunity to earn stamps redeemable for certificates and incentives.

Florence Cook, health promotion coordinator, said the goal is "to get people involved in taking responsibility for their health." The program offers lifestyle classes in nutrition, fitness, stress management and other health issues. Travelers earn a passport stamp each time they arrive at a learning-more-about-improving-their-health destination.

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3) New system for disease surveillance

By Karen Murphy, Navy Environmental Health Center, Norfolk, Va.

Norfolk, Va.- The Navy unveiled an automated reporting system to detect the outbreak of infectious diseases worldwide. The surveillance system has far-reaching ramifications for early identification of the many emerging infectious diseases.

"It's a tool for rapidly reporting unusual as well as

common diseases," according to epidemiologist Robert C. Morrow of the Navy Environmental Health Center in Norfolk, Va. The system has information on 72 diseases from chickenpox to Ebola virus. When a Sailor or Marine is diagnosed with one of these diseases, the Navy requires that it be reported immediately. The new system makes it easy for Navy medical personnel in hospitals, clinics and ships around the world to e-mail the report to epidemiologists at the closest Navy Preventive Medicine Unit. These units are located in Italy, Hawaii, San Diego and Norfolk. Hospital Corpsmen can carry the program on a laptop computer when they deploy with U.S. Marines and Navy SEALs, and e-mail the report from the field.

The reports are forwarded to the Navy Environmental Health Center for analysis. "We look for trends and pool the findings with data from the other services," said Morrow. "We share the information with government agencies and universities. The CDC relies on the military for information of this type," he said.

The program is available on the Navy Environmental Health Center's homepage at <http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/prevmed/software.htm>

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4) USS GARY assists British merchant vessel
>From Surface Forces Pacific Public Affairs Office

While transiting the Arabian Sea, 250 miles from the nearest port, USS GARY (FFG 51) was hailed by the merchant vessel BRITISH HARRIER of Hamilton, England, requesting assistance for a seriously injured crew member.

The call indicated one of BRITISH HARRIER's crew members had received severe burns when a gasket failed while he was changing an oil filter on the ship's fuel oil system. The GARY'S corpsman, Chief Hospitalman Clyde Fischer, went by small boat to administer first aid.

When HMC (SW) Fischer arrived, he found the crewman in intense pain with first- and second-degree burns over his arms, neck, forehead and eyes. Chief Fischer provided medicine to ease the pain, applied an intravenous hookup and treated him for shock.

Because of extensive burns caused by 300-degree oil, the USS HARRY W. HILL (DD886), another ship in the Middle East Surface Action Group, medical officer, LT Robert Stabley, was called in and determined that although the injuries were not life threatening, further medical attention was needed.

The USNS TIPPECANOE (TAO 199) was in the area and going to the Arabian Gulf where medical facilities were available. While GARY'S helicopter hovered over the weather deck of BRITISH HARRIER, HMC (SW) Fischer and aircrewman Third Class Antisubmarine Warfare Technician Andrew Nelson of Scottsboro, Neb. prepared the injured crewman for medical evacuation by air.

With the injured crewman safely on TIPPECANOE for further medical attention, HMC(SW) Fischer said, "I was extremely proud of GARY and USS HARRY W. HILL for their proficiency in responding to this emergency. We had been in the Gulf for the past three

months and were doing similar operations daily. This meant the crew knew exactly what had to be done and how, with no delays for something time critical."

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5) Toddler 'bounces back' after 8-story fall

By Bill Doughty, USNH Yokosuka

Words like "amazing" "miraculous" and "incredible" just aren't good enough to describe the case of John Pugh, the 17-month-old boy who fell from the eighth floor of his high rise apartment at NAF Atsugi, Japan -- and survived.

John, son of Chief Air Traffic Controller Timothy and wife Kathie Pugh, saw his first snowfall on the afternoon of January 8 and decided he wanted a closer look. He used a hamper to climb onto his washing machine, reached out the tiny laundry room window to grab some snowflakes and fell to the ground.

Emergency Medicine Technician Hospitalman Second Class Juan Breboneria and driver Kaoru Kashiwagi arrived in less than a minute. "We knew it was a high rise, so we expected the worst," said HM2 Breboneria. "The moment I saw the baby and heard him crying, I knew it was a good sign."

When the ambulance arrived at the branch clinic, a team of physicians, nurses, and corpsmen examined the patient and found him alert, able to move, and breathing properly. There was no bleeding and only a couple of small bruises.

But John needed further evaluation and was transferred to nearby Kitasato University Hospital. There, another team of doctors and nurses began a thorough examination of the young boy. They found five broken ribs, a partially deflated lung and a dime-sized bruise on his liver -- minor injuries considering the distance he fell.

John was ready for release several days later. His father praised the medical care provided -- from the ambulance response time and assessment at Branch Medical Clinic Atsugi to the care provided at Kitasato. "They were all instrumental in saving his life," he said.

While John was an inpatient at Kitasato, staff members from the branch clinic visited every day. "The doctors and nurses kept coming up to us and kept us informed," said Chief Pugh. "I can't say enough about them and the outstanding care they provided in all aspects."

The only complaint came from young John, who found himself hooked up to an IV, high up in a hospital crib. His first words after the accident: "Want down."

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6) Hospital continues tradition of excellence

By LCDR David A. Tait, NC

Naval Hospital Guantanamo Bay personnel recently had reason to show off their new technology and facilities.

Hospital personnel had made technological advances and infrastructure changes since their 1996 successful support of

Operations Sea Signal and Able Vigil.

Then, thousands of Cuban and Haitian immigrants processed on "Gitmo" taxed the support capabilities of the already old hospital. Not only had the hospital become the people's primary care facility, monthly surgical operations had increased from a normal of 20-30 to a high of 75-80 procedures.

Now, a new infrastructure was on display. Telemedicine technology is being planned, new air conditioning units are in place, and a new washing/decontamination unit is ready for use. New and expanded facilities improved both medical treatment for customers and health training of staff.

Not only was higher efficiency equipment in use, new systems, such as the wash/decontamination unit met water concerns by using less of Guantanamo Bay's precious liquid.

When VADM Harold M. Koenig, Surgeon General of the Navy, visited the hospital, he helped the staff dedicate two new buildings. The staff education and training building was dedicated to ADM John Blair Gibbs, MC, who was killed during the Spanish American War in 1898. The renovated command fitness center was dedicated to CAPT George E. Gibson, MSC, USN (ret.). CAPT Gibson, a proponent of physical fitness, served three tours at Guantanamo Bay, the last as commanding officer of the hospital from 1994 through 1996.

He told the assembled crew, "From what I've seen you all have no problems with these...you are already doing them."

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7) Naval Medical Clinic Pearl Harbor achieves perfection

By LTJG Adam Pender, Naval Medical Clinic Pearl Harbor

Naval Medical Clinic (NMC) Pearl Harbor has perfected the techniques of excellent medical care, and it showed in the clinic's recent accreditation evaluation. NMC Pearl Harbor is the only medical facility in the Navy to score a perfect 100 percent accreditation rating during 1997.

The survey, conducted every three years by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), evaluates medical facilities for compliance of health care against established benchmarks. Nationwide, the average score on the survey is 94, with only about 10% of all ambulatory care facilities receiving perfect scores of 100.

Accreditation by the JCAHO is recognized nationwide as a symbol of quality that indicates an organization meets certain performance standards in key functions. What all this means is, if an organization is properly performing its functions, its patients will benefit in quality health care.

"Everyone at this command has made a commitment to providing quality patient care at every facet of the organization," said CAPT Robert Murphy, commanding officer of NMC Pearl Harbor. "This achievement is proof that all that hard work has paid off. Our commitment to quality is something that our patients deserve and will continue to receive long into the future."

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8) Naval Hospital Lemoore wins CINCPACFLT Golden Anchor Award

Naval Hospital Lemoore Sailors have a lot to crow about these days. The Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, has awarded the 1997 Golden Anchor Award (Medical Command) to the hospital for outstanding achievement in personnel advancement, education, career program management and quality of life.

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9) Navy dental technician training consolidation

By LT Joe Lamberton, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Ending 49 years of training classes, the Naval School of Dental Assisting and Technology (NSDAT) in San Diego, will be decommissioned January 30.

Responding to the Interservice Training Review Organization program, Dental Assisting "A" and Dental Laboratory Technology "C" Schools will move to Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas. Navy personnel will then train with Air Force and Army personnel in a tri-service school. NSDAT graduated its last class January 15.

The remaining training programs, Medical Department Administration Technician and Dental Equipment Repair Technology will transfer to the Naval School of Health Sciences, San Diego January 30.

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10) Armed Forces essay contest

>From Armed Service YMCA Public Affairs

SPRINGFIELD, Va., - Twenty savings bonds totaling \$5,000 will be awarded in the Armed Services YMCA 1998 Essay Contest.

The "Young Readers Project" Essay Contest is a worldwide effort to encourage reading among military family members. Winners of the 20 U.S. savings bonds will be announced in April. The program has categories for students in grades preschool through three, four through six, middle school, and high school.

A panel of judges will make its selections based on originality, clarity of writing, and on the impact that reading has had on the student writing the essay.

Essays must be received at the National Headquarters of the Armed Services YMCA by Tuesday, March 31, 1998. Submissions should be sent e-mail to: asymca@erols.com. Families that do not have access to electronic mail facilities may submit essays by regular mail, but entries must be postmarked by midnight, March 31, 1998. Winning entries will be announced in April 1998.

For additional information about this year's contest or about the Armed Services YMCA, contact the national headquarters at: asymca@erols.com or a local branch of the Armed Services YMCA, if there is one in your community.

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11) TRICARE Question and Answer

Q. I just enrolled in TRICARE Prime and now have a primary care manager (PCM). If I know that I have to see a specialist, do I need to contact my PCM before I go?

A. For those enrolled in TRICARE Prime, it is always necessary to first consult your PCM for specialty care. If you need to see a specialist, your PCM will help make an appointment for you.

For more information contact your local TRICARE Service Office.

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12) Healthwatch: Getting the upper hand on snack attacks

>From Healthier People Publications

When a popular woman's magazine asked its readers about what they feared most, death or being fat, 52 percent said being fat!

Obviously a lot of people are concerned with what, how much, and how often they eat (not to mention whether or not they're getting enough exercise).

Everyone has an appetite for certain foods. But when that appetite becomes extreme, it's called a craving. People often have so many pressures in their lives, and cravings are so easy to satisfy, their intention to avoid fatty or sugary snacks is the first healthy habit to "surrender."

It doesn't have to be that way. Here are some tips for fighting off those fattening "snack attacks:"

Intense cravings can result from mood swings or stress. Eating only masks the symptoms. Try discovering what might really be pushing you to seek solace in food. Addressing that problem might reduce the craving for an unhealthy snack.

If you normally crave salty foods, eggs, or meat products, avoid alcohol or sweets. One usually leads to the other.

Stock your pantry and refrigerator with plain popcorn, whole grain bagels, unsalted pretzels, rice cakes, unsweetened fruit juices, fresh fruits and vegetables, plain low-fat yogurt and low-sodium cheeses. Use salt substitutes, if you need to.

Bring a naturally sweet fresh fruit, such as grapes or a pear, to work for your break, rather than buying candy from a vending machine.

Choose snacks rich in dietary fiber: fresh fruits with edible seeds (berries) or edible skins (apples or peaches), raw vegetables, or whole grain breads or bagels (whole wheat or rye).

Watch out for certain kinds of "trail mix" and some granolas. They may be laden with sugar and fat but advertised as "healthy snacks." Read labels carefully.

Bake or buy low-sugar, low-fat, whole-grain bran muffins or zucchini bread. They'll zap just about any "snack attack."

Most of us have come to depend on processed or packaged foods, or foods derived from high-fat, high-cholesterol animal products rather than grains, fresh vegetables and fruits, and legumes (beans, peas, and lentils). It's a hard legacy to

escape, especially when snacking. But armed with the assurance of improved health, you can break the shackles of this "snacking slavery" by "snacking smart."

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Feedback and comments are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact MEDNEWS editor, Earl Hicks, at e-mail <mednews@bms200.med.navy.mil>, telephone 202/762-3218 (DSN 762-3218), or fax 202/762-3224.

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